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erthe then the height and altitude of the middle region of the verye English Alpes amountes unto in your shier."

Grosart finds in this passage concerning the "English" Alps an allusion to Pendle Hill, and thereby establishes his conclusion that "your shier" (*i. e.*, Spenser's shire) is no other than Lancashire. He notes that the editor of Harvey, in his introduction, makes the passage read "in the aier," but, without consulting the manuscript, dismisses the unfavorable reading as a "grotesque mistake." But it is not a mistake. The manuscript (B. M., Sloane 93, fol. 37) was very faultily printed, as G. C. Moore Smith long since pointed out in *Notes and Queries*, varying here in several particulars. According to my collation the manuscript reads:

" . . . a greate deale deeper in ye Center of ye Erthe then ye height and altitude of ye very heighest Alpes amountes unto in ye middle region of ye Aier."

The "English" Alps prove to have been a delusion.

One further possible indication of a visit to the North of England has been sought in Spenser's use of northern dialect in the *Calendrar*. Certainly, there were northern men in London, Spenser's printer among them; and there were northern men at Cambridge during his seven years' residence at the university. But the poet's knowledge of northern dialect is amply accounted for in his boyhood by the circumstance that he attended the Merchant Taylors' School. The dialect was there impressed upon him by its use on the part of the school ushers. In his *History of the Merchant Taylors' School* (p. 25), Wilson notes that their use of northern English was regarded as objectionable. At the first visitation, on Friday, August 16, 1562, the examiners were well pleased. "The ushers had this only fault, that, being northern men born, they had not taught the children to speak distinctly, or to pronounce their words so well as they ought." For Spenser's excursions into dialect study we need not posit a visit to the North of England—nor, indeed, for any other reason.

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BRIEF MENTION

On the Art of Writing, by Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch (Cambridge, University Press; New York, G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1916). The American teacher would be led by the title of this book to look for a text-book, to be added to the unnumbered class-room manuals produced in hot haste to meet the demands of the enormously increased attention the colleges have come to bestow on the subject of English Composition. It is, however, not a text-book or methodical treatise, nor is it addressed to American students. There is a double advantage in this. The reader will be assisted in deepening his convic-

tions with reference to certain general principles, and he will be impelled to reflect on differences in academic attitude to the subject. The book consists of the inaugural lectures of a mature literary man,—one who has had a large share of the principal opportunities of his life, and has earned his wages (cf. p. 3),—who has been called to follow Dr. Verrall as Professor of English Literature in the University of Cambridge. Familiarity with Sir Arthur's literary work must surely keep anyone from going far astray in conjecturing the outstanding features of these lectures; it would certainly not fail to prepare anyone for the emphasis put on a citation from the authoritative definition of the newly assumed office: "The Professor shall treat this subject on literary and critical rather than on philological and linguistic lines" (p. 9). These words must not be construed into a presumption unfavorable to philological scholarship, of this Sir Arthur assured his hearers, for his argument soon brought him to where he had to speak plainly of the matter: "I use no disrespect towards those learned scholars whose labours will help you, Gentlemen, to enjoy it [a great work in literature] afterwards, in other ways and from other aspects; since I hold there is no surer sign of intellectual ill-breeding than to speak, even to feel, slightly of any knowledge, oneself does not happen to possess." That might pass as an irresponsible view of Scholarship from a Cornish Window, but, Shade of Archbishop Parker! these words were uttered where they might be interpreted into a denial of the imputed value of the legacy reposing in the Library of Corpus Christi. Is it appropriate before an academic audience in a great national university even to hint at the possibility of a state of mind that does not assume that all sound learning is equally honorable? The lecturer has, however, so managed his argument that he has found it necessary to give specific assurance of his good-breeding, and to utter a caution against being misunderstood: "I am not persuading you to despise your linguistic descent. English is English—our language; and all its history to be venerated by us. I am not persuading you to despise linguistic study. *All learning is venerable*" (p. 226). There we have the note of Sir Arthur's intellectual temper, and in a setting that requires no comment.

The foregoing observations will prepare the reader of these lectures to find that personal opinion is exalted above accurate knowledge. This would be more than tolerable, it would be valuable, if done in a spirit manifesting philosophic seriousness. But there is no philosophy here to give depth and coherence to argument, but only light, unreasoned, hedonistic insistence on personal convictions. A characteristic passage may be cited: "Of Anglo-Saxon prose I know little indeed, but enough of the world to feel reasonably sure that if it contained any single masterpiece—or anything that could be paraded as a masterpiece—we should have heard enough about it long before now. It was invented by King Alfred

for excellent political reasons; but, like other ready-made political inventions in this country, it refused to thrive. I think it can be demonstrated, that the true line of intellectual descent in prose lies through Bede (who wrote in Latin, the 'universal language'), and not through the Blickling Homilies, or Ælfric, or the Saxon Chronicle." A professional lecture on the "Lineage of English Literature" is thus complacently based on hear-say information and on inadmissible linguistic theory. A professor's business is to expound principles underlying accurately observed phenomena. Clever and irresponsible *obiter dicta*, well, let their stimulating effects be granted, but not mistaken for another and more profound experience.

Leaving aside the deeper subject of the power and dignity of knowledge,—without which no nation can have power and dignity,—and leaving aside the ethical and the æsthetic effects of the disinterested pursuit of truth on character and personality,—without which morals and canons of taste must be unstable,—Sir Arthur is concerned with notions of the Art of literature, reviewed in a refined and sprightly manner, but not without a degree of pedantry and of an obtrusion of his personality that one must feel to be in contradiction of his implied and expressed precepts.

"English literature being an art, with a living and therefore improvable language for its medium or vehicle," the lecturer declares his purpose as professor to be to direct his pupils in the practice of writing, so that, if possible, "appropriate, perspicuous, accurate, persuasive writing," may be "a recognisable hall-mark of anything turned out by our English School" (p. 26); "and I would add (growing somewhat harder) a hall-mark of all Cambridge style so far as our English School can influence it" (p. 35). The practice of English verse will also be encouraged. There is, therefore, a lecture "On the Difference between Verse and Prose," and two on the "Capital Difficulty" of these divisions,—two lectures that show Sir Arthur at his best in an effort to give to an eclectic notion the importance of a fundamental principle. The two propositions of the argument fit into each other as neatly as the parts adjacent to a seam in a cracked vase: "the capital difficulty of prose consists in saying extraordinary things" (p. 89), "to handle the high emotional moments which more properly belong to verse" (p. 130); "the capital difficulty of verse consists in saying ordinary things";—"with verse, keyed for high moments, the trouble is to manage the intervals, with prose the trouble is to manage the high moments" (p. 89). The argument is entertainingly handled, but its relative value is surprisingly overestimated.

The author's name is sufficient assurance that this book of lectures will entertain the reader, and start up in him many a sensation of hearty and agreeable assent as well as of positive and profitable dissent.

J. W. B.

Professor J. B. Fletcher's *Dante* (Home University Library: New York: H. Holt & Co., 1916; price, 50 cents) is not so much an introduction to the study of Dante, as an essay which presupposes considerable knowledge of the subject. The events of the poet's life are merely alluded to; his writings are not expounded for the beginner, but elaborately interpreted in accordance with certain theories, already partially set forth in previous publications. This method may not correspond to the general purpose of the Home University Library, but the book is interesting and often illuminating, even if not always to be followed implicitly.

According to Professor Fletcher's theory, which is concerned largely with Dante's inner life as expressed in his writings, the *Vita Nuova*, *Convivio*, and *Divina Commedia*, form a trilogy,—not, as was argued by Witte and others in the last century, showing changes in point of view, but rather as showing stages in the continuous development of one identical point of view. "The *Divine Comedy* is simply that part of the personal confession of the *New Life*, which comes after Beatrice's death writ large" (p. 51). The *Convivio* is essentially a demonstration that even in the episode of the *donna pietosa* Dante was following, though unintelligently, the dictation of Beatrice; it is an essential part of the drama, the "action" of which "is how God drew him to himself by the agency of Beatrice" (p. 15). Professor Fletcher, it seems to us, is sometimes led into the fallacy of mistaking a figure of speech for logical proof, or an analogy for an argument. He is safe in saying of the *Vita Nuova* that, "so far from being an ingenuous diary of the heart, it is an almost uniquely complex piece of literary goldsmith's art;" but this does not necessarily lead to his conclusion that the book is constructed upon subtle symbolic correspondences with the *Divina Commedia*. He believes in the historicity of the events of the *Vita Nuova*, and here again he is on solid ground; when he says, however, that its "enigmatic manner is due neither to immature clumsiness nor to literary affectation. It is rather a carefully thought out attempt to render dramatically the gradual process of Dante's own spiritual enlightenment under the guidance of love" (p. 33), he begins to base his arguments on assumptions. Taking due account of the artificiality of the *Vita Nuova*, it is still not safe to identify its inner meaning with that of the *Commedia*, and to assume throughout Dante's works the consistency that it found in a modern interpretation. It may be that Dante would have accepted some such interpretation if it had been presented to him; but we are not justified in assuming that it was in his mind.

After a brief introduction, the book is divided into three long chapters—Dante's Personal Confessions, The Teaching of Dante, The Art of Dante. At the very beginning the author attacks some of the most difficult problems. He shows familiarity with Dante's writings and with many of the books which he used as authorities. Some statements call for protest, such as the identification of

Gentucca (*Purg.* xxiv) with the stony-hearted damsel (pp. 69, 194), and the excessive application of symmetry (pp. 102-4). Dante was not exiled in 1300 (p. 48). The symmetrical arrangement of the *Vita Nuova* was, not "originally noted by C. E. Norton" (p. 104), but by Gabriele Rossetti. Professor Fletcher's style, though sometimes involved, is strikingly original; his literary allusions are novel and appropriate. Emphasis upon the importance of theology (pp. 57, 81, etc.) is in line with the tendency of the best Italian criticism, but the conclusions reached are not the same. The pages devoted to Dante as a literary artist separate with fine discrimination what is of permanent value from what has lost its appeal. A brief bibliography of books in English is included, and also an index.

K. MCK.

Philip Stephan Barto's *Tannhäuser and the Mountain of Venus: a Study in the Legend of the Germanic Paradise* (New York, Oxford University Press, 1916, pp. xiii + 258) is a work of scholarly soundness and of absorbing interest. If at first approach it gives the appearance of undue pretentiousness, a cover-to-cover reading of it assures one that it justifies its pretensions. The book presents a novel conception of the myths of Tannhäuser and of the *Venusberg* which, founded upon hitherto inaccessible documents and references, stands in direct contradiction to all existing attempts to clear up the origin and interrelation of the two legends. Gaston Paris professed to find the source of the legendary material in Italian accounts of a transcendental Love Mountain; Kluge vindicated a Germanic origin for Tannhäuser but conceded the Southern starting-point of the *Venusberg*; the late R. M. Meyer contended for the Germanic provenience of both legends. The second aspect of the question, the connection of the Minnesinger Tannhäuser with the facts of folk-lore, Erich Schmidt and Wolfgang Golther sought to fixate in setting up the poet as the real hero of the original myth. Still a third avenue of approach is found in Elster who assumed that the fifteenth-century versions of the Tannhäuser-legend are based on a pro-papal treatment of an early Germanic myth, the idea of an unforgiving Pope being a later accretion born of Protestant partisanship; *hoc contra*, Remy regards the legend as it developed on German soil, a fusion of two distinct motives, the international Christian legend of mercy, superimposed upon a pagan Celtic myth of a mortal's sojourn in *faerie*. Barto's merit is the objective scrutinizing of the entire field of contention and the resultant insistence upon the essentially Germanic *and* unitary character of the basic motives to be found both in the Tannhäuser, the *Venusberg*, and the Knight of the Swan. Underlying and tributary to each of these three legends is the conception of the Grail, as it changed from the venerated jewelled cup of Chrestien of Troyes, thru Wolfram von Eschenbach's magic stone, into a pledge

of carnal pleasure, a festival of ribald abandon and lastly a heathen earthly paradise, at first most likely not demoniacal in character (cf. Arthur's Avalon and St. Brandan's Isle of the Blessed), located either in a land-locked fertile plain in India (cf. Barto's article, *Journal of English and Germanic Philology*, July, 1916, written subsequent to his monograph) or in a hollow mountain, in Tuscany or in Cyprus, which was ruled over by Venus and soon assumed the appellation of *Venusberg*. Numerous literary allusions from the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries are adduced to show not only that the knight Danhuser was held to be the royal consort of Venus and that the Knight of the Swan, called Helias as well as Lohengrin, first issued forth from this anathematized Court of Love but also that the two knights must, according to the accounts of popular tradition, be held to be originally identical. Interesting and for the most part convincing reading is furnished also by the rôle played by the Church of Rome in Tannhäuser's hopelessness of salvation, and by the discussion of the relative primitiveness of the *Song of Daniel*. Operating with literary evidence the author treads on firm ground. When dealing however with some minor hypotheses, he exposes himself to fallacies. Thus it will be hardly tenable, from a philological standpoint, to connect the terms *Dan*, the name of the eponymous ancestor of the Danes, *Dan*-huser, *Wodan*, *Teutones* and *Danzic* on the *ipse dixit* of the Dutch geographer Cluverius, altho such a collocation might yet prove to contain a pregnant suggestion as to the enigmatic entrance of Tannhäuser into the myth; nor can we give unreserved approval to the details of the identification of the hero of the Danhäuser-song with the Knight of the Swan. Copious notes, listing original references, an appendix on the Folk-Song of Tannhäuser printing for the first time all accessible versions of the song with their sources, are added to the investigation, and a comprehensive bibliography (but no index!), to which might be added Junk, *Tannhäuser in Sage und Dichtung* (München, 1911), Rank, *Die Lohengrinsage* (Wien, 1910), von Kralik, *Die Gralsage, gesammelt, erneuert und erläutert* (Ravensburg, 1907, pp. 348), and Pokorny, *Der Gral in Irland und die mythischen Grundlagen der Gralsage* (Wien, 1912), closes the book which must be pronounced a credit to American scholarship. It is a pity that the author did not see fit to give the larger bearings of the terrestrial-paradise type of folk-lore tradition, collate all the Germanic evidences and correlate them with some of their decisive international echoes. That he is competent to undertake such an investigation, is amply shown in his account of Sceaf, Baldr, Arthur, and Atli in relation to sleep as the mythological symbol for the passing to a transcendental paradise. On the whole, his all too terse manner of style obscures many a thought that merits later elaboration.

A. G.